



The tragical story of the August 20, 2006 severe thunderstorm in Budapest as an example for the importance of the good communication in the disaster management

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A severe thunderstorm caught Budapest on 20th August 2006, wreaking havoc during the celebrations of the Constitution Day. Around 1.2 million spectators of the Constitution Day fireworks were hit by storm and hail shortly after the show began at 21:00 local time. Heavy rain and wind-gusts over 120 km/h uprooted trees, smashed cars and windows and ripped tiles off rooftops. 5 people died and hundreds injured as a result of the fierce storm.

The Hungarian Meteorological Service (HMS) had forecasted the cold front days ahead. Also on the web-based warning system of HMS, which is available for everyone, the forecasters issued the red level warning in due time. Additionally, on the day of the tragical weather event the forecasters sent several warnings to the Disaster Management Organization which is official duty of HMS. On contractual basis the different partners of HMS have been also warned.

The forecast was good, the warning was issued in due time. What is the reason, that the tragedy couldn't have been prevented? The answer is the lack of the communication between the responsible organizations in disaster management. The government of Hungary has investigated the circumstances of the catastrophe. The presentation tries shortly to summarize the lessons drawing from this sad weather story and the arrangements have been made after the event to avoid such a tragical situations.